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McGUINTY GOVERNMENT APPROVES NEW CT SCANNER FOR HURON COUNTY

New CT Scanner Will Provide Area Residents With Diagnostic Care Closer To Home

GODERICH – The McGuinty government is working in close partnership with the residents of Huron County to provide better access to diagnostic services thanks to the new CT scanner that has been approved for operation at Alexandra Marine and General Hospital, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"We know that the best care is the care that is delivered closer to home," Smitherman said. "Today's announcement means Huron County residents will no longer need to travel to other cities to receive the diagnostic scans that they need – now they will be able to get this important service in their own backyard."

The government credits the hospital and local community with purchasing the new CT scanner at Alexandra Marine and General Hospital. This diagnostic tool will deliver approximately 5,000 scans per year for the approximately 60,000 residents of Huron County and tourists visiting the area during the busy summer months. It is expected to be operational by December 2008.

"This CT scanner is an integral part of our plan to continually improve services for the patients served by the Alexandra Marine and General Hospital," said Wayne Lyons, Chair, Alexandra Marine and General Hospital.

"This announcement is helping to move health care in Huron County forward" said MPP Carol Mitchell. "Today we are one step closer to having this very important health care service available to all residents of the county"

This is just one example of how the McGuinty government has improved access to health care services in the South West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Other initiatives include:

- Investing over $8.3 million in the South West LHIN towards increasing services and lowering wait times for diagnostic services including over $700,000 for 2,847 incremental CT operating hours
- Reducing wait times in the South West LHIN for cataract surgery by almost 70 per cent, hip and knee replacements by almost 40 per cent and over 26 per cent respectively, cancer surgery by 12 per cent, angiography by 49 per cent, angioplasty by almost 44 per cent, and cardiac bypass surgery wait times by over 27 per cent
- Expanding access to doctors and nurses by creating 150 new Family Health Teams across the province, including 16 in the South West LHIN.

"We continue to make significant investments in CT and MRI scans," said Smitherman. "The addition of a CT scanner at Alexandra Marine and General Hospital will help us see improvements in wait times for this area."

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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